

MEMORANDUM

To: Sarah Kasparian
Senior Planning Officer

From: Debbie Ealand
Housing Supply Officer
Ext: 4526

Your Ref: 24/01013/HYA

Date: 27 August 2025

**Hybrid application for residential development of up to 325 dwellings comprising (a) full planning application for Phase 1 comprising 106 dwellings and associated infrastructure including access from Newmarket Road, emergency and pedestrian/cycle access from Burloes Hall Drive, internal highways, public open space, landscaping and drainage and b) outline application for up to 219 dwellings and associated infrastructure with all matters reserved apart from primary means of access and emergency and pedestrian/cycle access from Burloes Hall Drive. Land Surrounding Burloes Cottages Newmarket Road Royston Hertfordshire.
Ref No: 24/01013/HYA**

Dear Sarah,

Thank you for your emails of 13th August and 18th August 2025 in respect of the above Hybrid application for full planning permission on phase 1 and outline permission for the remainder.

The affordable housing requirement is 40% on sites which will provide 25 dwellings or more, in accordance with the Local Plan. Within the overall affordable housing requirement, the council requires a 65% rented/ 35% affordable home ownership or other forms of affordable housing tenure mix, in accordance with the Local Plan and the Developer Contributions SPD.

There are four allocated housing sites in Royston in the Local Plan, which are expected to deliver approximately 500 new homes. The site is an allocated site, site RY10 and is expected to deliver 300 new homes.

The preparation and review of all policies should be underpinned by relevant and up-to-date evidence. Strategic policies should be informed by a local housing need assessment to determine the minimum number of homes needed, in accordance with the NPPF.

Paragraph 63 of the NPPF says "Within this context of establishing need, the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies. These groups should include (but are not limited to) those who require affordable housing (including Social Rent); families with children; looked after children; older people (including those who require retirement housing, housing with-care and care homes);

students; people with disabilities; service families; travellers; people who rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own homes.”

Paragraph 66 of the NPPF says “Where major development involving the provision of housing is proposed, planning policies and decisions should expect that the mix of affordable housing required meets identified local needs, across Social Rent, other affordable housing for rent and affordable home ownership tenures”.

Paragraph 64 of the NPPF says “Where a need for affordable housing is identified, planning policies should specify the type of affordable housing required (including the minimum proportion of Social Rent homes required), and expect it to be met on-site unless:

- a) off-site provision or an appropriate financial contribution in lieu can be robustly justified; and
- b) the agreed approach contributes to the objective of creating mixed and balanced communities.”

For phase 1 based on the provision of 106 dwellings, the affordable housing requirement of 40% equates to 42 affordable dwellings. However, following a viability assessment the affordable housing provision is to be based on a 25% affordable housing provision.

As stated, within the overall affordable housing requirement, the Council requires a 65% rented / 35% intermediate affordable housing tenure split, in accordance with the Local Plan and the Developer Contributions SPD. Based on the provision of 106 dwellings on phase 1, 25% affordable housing equates to 27 affordable homes; 18 for rent and 9 affordable home ownership tenure.

The 2023 North Herts & Stevenage Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) update for the 65% rented tenure on phase 1 shows the following mix best meets housing need:

18 x 7% x 1 bed flats (1)
18 x 9% x 2 bed flats (2)
18 x 22% x 2 bed houses (4)
18 x 50% x 3 bed houses (9) *
18 x 10% x 4 bed houses (2)
18 x 2% 5+ bed houses. (0)

For the 35% affordable home ownership tenure on phase 1 the 2023 SHMA shows the following mix best meets housing needs:

9 x 22% x 1 bed flats (2)
9 x 15% x 2 bed flats (1)
9 x 43% x 2 bed houses (4)
9 x 20% x 3 bed houses (2).

For the outline application for up to 219 dwellings 25% affordable housing

equates to 55 affordable homes; 36 for rent and 19 affordable home ownership tenure.

The 2023 North Herts & Stevenage Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) update for the 65% rented tenure shows the following mix best meets housing need:

36 x 7% x 1 bed flats (2)
36 x 9% x 2 bed flats (3)
36 x 22% x 2 bed houses (8)
36 x 50% x 3 bed houses (18) *
36 x 10% x 4 bed houses (4)
36 x 2% 5+ bed houses. (1)

For the 35% affordable home ownership tenure the 2023 SHMA shows the following mix best meets housing needs:

19 x 22% x 1 bed flats (4)
19 x 15% x 2 bed flats (3)
19 x 43% x 2 bed houses (8)
19 x 20% x 3 bed houses (4).

* Evidence from the housing register suggests the number of three bed houses recommended in the SHMA is greater than required and there is high housing need for two bedroom family homes and a need for larger (4+ bedroom) family homes for rent. The provision of an increased number of two bedroom houses and fewer three bedroom houses would therefore be considered favourably.

In addition, there is a growing need for larger (3 and 4 bed) M4(3) wheelchair adapted homes, for families, which we will seek to deliver through the requirements of Policy HS5: Accessible and adaptable housing.

The applicant is proposing the provision of 23 affordable homes on phase 1 (22%), which is not acceptable. To meet housing needs the applicant should provide an additional 2 x 2 bed maisonettes, a three bed house and a four bed house.

It is noted that the applicant is proposing the provision of 4 x two bedroom bungalows to M4(3) wheelchair accessible standards. Two of these bungalows should be three bedroom bungalows to meet this growing need.

For phase 1 the affordable housing should comprise 2 x 1 bed maisonettes, 2 x 2 bed bungalows M4(3), 8 x 2 bed houses, 2 x 3 bed bungalows M4(3), 3 x 3 bed houses and 1 x 4 bed house for rent and 4 x 2 bed maisonettes, 2 x 2 bed houses and 3 x 3 bed houses for affordable home ownership.

The affordable homes should be owned and managed by a registered provider, be spread across the site in small clusters rather than be situated on one part of the site and should be physically indistinguishable from the market housing.

The Affordable Tenure Plan needs to differentiate between the rented affordable homes and the affordable home ownership.

The definition for affordable housing includes housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers).

The Council currently accept social rent and affordable rent for the rented tenure dwellings, although the 2023 SHMA provides evidence that many more people require social rented homes, and this tenure is recognised in the NPPF.

It should be noted that the affordable rent for one or two bedroom dwellings should be no more than 80% of the equivalent local market rent (including service charges, where applicable).

For three bedroom dwellings the affordable rent should be no more than 70% of the equivalent local market rent (including service charges, where applicable) and for a four bedroom dwelling the rent should be no more than the equivalent rent (excluding service charges, where applicable) for a social rented home in the locality, to ensure affordability.

All rents must be within Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates, in accordance with the Local Plan, the Council's Tenancy Strategy and the Developer Contributions SPD.

The nationally described technical housing standards provide the nationally recognised standards for bedrooms, storage and internal areas in new dwellings across all tenures. All the affordable units are required to meet these standards.

Parking courts are not desirable as there is often limited, or no natural surveillance and residents prefer to park outside or near to their homes. To minimise on street parking, parking spaces should be provided in front of or adjacent properties with good natural surveillance.

The rented tenure flats and the affordable home ownership tenure flats should not be in a block together as Registered Providers (RPs) do not like mixed tenure blocks. RPs prefer flats, particularly for rent, to be in a self-contained block, with their own entrance as this works better in terms of management and maintenance.

Service charges costs for affordable housing residents are generally cheaper in self-contained blocks as RPs can negotiate their own service contracts or use their in-house maintenance teams.

Grant funding for the provision of affordable housing is not available on S106 sites, and any affordable homes should be delivered through planning gain alone.

The applicant will need to provide documentary evidence of any viability issues using a recognised financial toolkit, which the Council will have independently

assessed at full expense to the applicant.

I hope this information assists you. Please contact me if you require any further information.

Regards

Debbie Ealand
Housing Supply Officer